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ABSTRACT

A report is given of a trip to the Peoples' Republic of China. In July 1978, 22 educators and social workers traveled to five cities in China to observe how mass-line democratic centralism produces grass-roots peer pressure for carrying out Communist party policy. "Mass line" is the overall policy direction on how to re-order Chinese society. "Democratic centralism" involves internalizing the mass line at the grass roots level and involving all citizens in political activity. In Peking, the group visited Peking University, the University library, and a May 7 cadre school. The university is presently enforcing a more strict admission policy than had been in effect under the Gang of Four's leadership. May 7 cadre schools are work and study retreats, mainly for bureaucrats, which combine physical labor with study of Marxism. In Yenan, the group visited the museum which commemorates Mao's battles against the Japanese and the Chinese Nationalists. The group also observed how an urban, communal neighborhood center is organized, relates politically to the national government, and transmits the mass line. In addition, the group visited the Great Wall, Mao's mausoleum, the Chin tomb, containing 8,000 life-size statues, and the Shensi Provincial Museum, which was originally a Confucian temple. The author concludes that the controlled involvement of each Chinese citizen in production and government is for them an acceptable and secure alternative to previous suffering and starvation. (AV)

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CHINA SINCE MAO; REPORT OF A STUDY TOUR, JULY 8-28, 1978*

Briefing

Our 22-member travel group met for two days of briefing in New York City. Most were not acquainted but all knew the tour leader, Myles Horton, age 75, vigorous gray-bearded founder (1932) of the adult education Highlander Center in Tennessee.

I knew Myles Horton as a fellow member of Spring Conference, an annual meeting in Chicago of concerned educators. He had inquired about my March 1974 Phi Delta Kappa trip to China prior to his first China trip in 1975. He later led a 1977 youth group's look at China's communes, both trips, I believe, sponsored, as was our 1978 trip, by Promoting Enduring Peace, Inc., a pacifist educational organization.

The Myles Horton-gathered group included--along with professors and social workers--a black woman colleague of the late Dr. Martin Luther King and an elderly Alabama white aristocrat turned liberal who aided black seamstress Mrs. Rosa Parks when her refusal to move to the back of the bus provoked the 1955 Montgomery, AL, bus boycott. Our group was, in short, an intelligent, much traveled, civil rights-oriented group ranging in age from 23 to 76 (four were over 70); well-read generally and particularly about PR China, cautiously and curiously objective rather than non-critical about Maoism and Chinese communism.

Myles Horton recommended that our group quest be to learn from the people at the grass roots about how the system works, how the "mass line" (Chinese communist aims) is handed down, debated, sometimes modified for practical carrying out (the latter process called "democratic centralism"). This quest was to prove somewhat illusory and subject to frequent reinterpretation: mass line, meaning overall policy direction on how to re-order Chinese society; centralized democracy, meaning internalizing the mass line at the grass roots level and through discussion, making practical sense out of the orders from above, and finally getting everyone involved by peer pressure in carrying out the mass line (party doctrine). Mass line and democratic centralism thus comprised a process, a struggle, a Marxian dialectic (thesis-antithesis-synthesis), and was the only way, said Myles Horton, by which the PR China leaders could reorder society with the people's cooperation. He believed the PRC leaders could not force ideas and ways on the people because there were just too many of them.

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Our group's goal was to try to understand how this mass line-democratic centralism managed to produce grass-roots peer pressure for carrying out Communist Party policy. Myles Horton hoped that such a study by our group would help reveal the current direction of the Chinese leaders and perhaps show how resistant or cooperative the people were.

The too-short New York briefing included a talk by a U.S. Government agriculturalist who has made many trips to China over a long time. He: (1) pointed out that China with four times the population and only 1/3 the arable land (only 11% of her land is arable) has learned to double crop and triple crop where possible, and (2) also explained that the "Gang of Four"

*See Franklin Parker, What Can We Learn from the Schools of China?, Phi Delta Kappa Fastback 89, Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47401, 50 pp., 1977.

illusions we would constantly hear referred to an elitist group within the Chinese Communist Party who had tried to wrest control for themselves; their main emphasis was on continual revolution or turmoil-with-a-purpose as more important than production and stability. The Gang of Four, he said, was the latest--and the eleventh--eruption of struggle over leadership direction in the Chinese Communist Party since taking power in 1949 (called "Liberation"). The leftward Gang of Four was alleged to want continual fervor, as seen in the 1966-69 Cultural Revolution (preferring doctrinal "redness"), and to oppose the pragmatic, production-oriented direction of moderates like the late Chou En-lai, Chairman Hua Kuo-fong, and Premier Teng, who envision steady progress toward making the PRChina a modern nation by the year 2000.

WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY 1978

Peking

Japan Airlines took the northern route across Canada; made a crew change and refueling stop at Anchorage, Alaska; flew on for a night's stopover at Tokyo's newly opened Narita Airport, under heavy security since displaced farmers--aided by radical students--had in the spring demonstrated violently against the expropriation of valued farm land for the airport's use. Searches were polite but thorough; occasional soldiers in battle gear looked like something out of "Star Wars."

A sense of excitement ran through our group at landing at Peking Airport, despite our travel-wise sophistication. We were greeted by a giant sign in Chinese: "Proletariates of the world, unite!" and by a cry from Myles Horton, who embraced Mrs. Lu of the China International Travel Service. She had guided his group in 1977. That day, and now, we marveled at her naturalness in returning his hug, unusual in the unemotional Chinese and extraordinary in Mrs. Lu as we came to know her: a small, trim, proper, 50-ish, polite but no-nonsense woman. She commanded quiet respect and this feeling grew within us during her subsequent most competent guidance of our group throughout its stay (we learned that as a girl she had been an underground Communist worker when Peking was under Chiang Kai-shek's KMT government; that she is now a party member; and that she was selected as best suited to meet our group's needs after months of correspondence from Myles Horton about where he wanted our group to go and what he wanted our group to explore).

Food

We stayed in the Friendship Hotel, rather than the more central Peking Hotel (I had stayed in the old section of the Peking Hotel in 1974), whose air-conditioned new section was full (we surmised of VIP foreign visitors). Friendship Hotel had a quiet atmosphere echoing an older, different period. All but I were enthusiastic about the oversupply of excellent Chinese food served course upon course. Not used to and not really liking Chinese food, I ate sparingly, lost 8 pounds in 2 1/2 weeks, and was gastronomically happy only when I slipped in to eat with our three vegetarians.

Shadow Boxing

Go out early in the morning in a Chinese city or village and you see exercisers doing t'ai-chi ch'uan, a gentle, rhythmic movement of arms, legs, and torsos. They do this exercise singly, in pairs, in groups, and sometimes en masse.

I saw a good many Chinese joggers in 1978 (but had seen none in 1974). You don't see many fat people in China (or in Japan). Betty and I were struck by the overweightness we saw on our return to the USA. By chance, we noted a medical study made of American POWs of the Vietnam War compared with a group who had not been captured. The former POWs are now significantly healthier because, the researchers said, of their being on a fat-free Chinese-type rice and vegetable diet and the absence of cigarettes and alcohol. Incidentally, Chinese average life span was long reported to be about 50 years, but a very late report states they now average living past 70 years.

EDUCATION

Peking University

Orientation talks in China are usually disjointed for many reasons: the set talk along doctrinal lines, every few sentences in Chinese must alternate with English translations, the inevitable explanations, the break for a look around, and the return for questions and answers--always in a room with Mao and Hua's photos on one wall and Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin's photos on the opposite wall.

We were told that Peking University was founded 80 years ago, in 1898; had 22 departments with 83 specialties; 2,800 faculty including researchers; 7,000 students, to be increased in 2-3 years to 10,000, then to 20,000, of which one-fourth will be postgraduates; 156 students from 36 countries (only a few from the USA); a 3.1 million-volume library (as compared to 700,000 volumes before Liberation).

We were told that the Peking Revolutionary Committee had sent a new administrator to Peking University to overcome damage done by the Gang of Four, who had dropped university entrance and other examinations and lowered requirements from 1973 until the Gang's expulsion in 1976 (my own reading is that entrance requirements and other exams were lowered soon after the Cultural Revolution of 1966-69.) New measures taken to raise the educational level include: giving university entrance exams nationwide with students of best ability being chosen, basic science being emphasized with more science laboratory time, new teaching materials (syllabi?) being prepared, courses being readjusted, return to 4-5 year courses (during Cultural Revolution of 1966-69 university courses were shortened to 3-4 years), of which 2 1/2 to 3 years include theory and the rest practical work; teachers being required to raise the quality of their teaching; and requiring university entrants to be senior middle school (i.e., our high school) graduates with good academic records. We were told that during the Gang of Four period, some cadres pushed their children into universities (including some who had completed only elementary school, at about age 12), and faculty had difficulty teaching those with little background or low ability. The Gang of

Four had wanted to allow only those who worked after middle school to enter the university, which meant that the brightest youth were not assured university places, went to work, and tended to forget what they had learned in middle school.

Further Explanation

The big change in Chinese education requires further explanation. It is a reassertion of quality or "expertness," as represented by development-oriented moderates such as the late Chou En-lai and the current Hua-Teng leadership; and it is a reaction against Chinese Communist doctrinal purity, or "redness," as represented by the Gang of Four: Chiang Ching (Mao's widow), Wang Hung-wen, Chang Chun-chia, and Yao Wen-yuan, now allegedly under house arrest. They believed that unless Chinese Communism continually reasserted its revolutionary character, it would compromise itself into moderateness or revisionism and return to private profit incentives, as they accused the "neo-capitalistic" USSR of doing.

We saw many students studying hard all over the Peking University campus and particularly in the crowded new library. We were told that entrance examinations for all of China's universities were in progress while we were there, the 17th and 18th of July.

A government news release of July 19 quoted the Vice Minister of Education as saying that, as of this fall, children will enter elementary school at age 6 instead of age 7, proceed for 5 years to age 11 instead of age 12, have 5 years of middle school, from age 11 to 16. The aim by 1985 is eight years for all youths in rural areas, ages 6-14; and ten years for all in urban areas, ages 6-16. The news release decried the Gang of Four slashback on education, admitted that "a general decline in the quality of education and a shortage of specialists" had occurred, and urged "raising quality while vigorously popularizing education." It, too, reported the resumption in 1977 of university entrance examinations for China's 460 "regular schools of higher education."

It was stressed that 80 key universities, of which Peking University is the most important, would have their choice of those passing the nationwide university entrance exams and the other universities and institutes would choose from the remainder of students.

Peking University Library

The reading rooms were full of students in the new library building (I had visited the old building in March 1974). We went too quickly through the stacks, but I noticed in 1978 (as I had noticed in 1974) that the education books were generally old. Other observers also say that the English language collection is inadequate and reference books are some years old.

The new thrust in education was also described in the April 1978 China Reconstructs, which gave these high points: New university entrants will be middle school graduates under age 25 (or age 30 for those with "special skill who have done good work," preference going to those graduates of 1966 and 1967, the first years of the Cultural Revolution, when schools were closed). In October 1977, when the new university entrance rules were announced, 5.7 million young people had applied.

--About 30% of new university students came from among senior middle school graduates of 1977.

--The Chinese admit that "we have a huge population and there are not enough higher institutions; the percentage of accepted applicants is still very small."

--Advanced training in other than universities is available in:

(1) factory-run "July 21" colleges for technical training; and

(2) commune-run "colleges" for training rural cadres.

--Future plans: by 1985, China hopes to offer senior middle school education for all in the cities (10 years) and junior middle school education for all in rural areas (8 years); without further detail the article promised more higher education, more spare-time education, and more on-the-job training for skilled industrial workers.

THURSDAY, JULY 13, 1978

May 7 Cadre School

Cadre, French term originally referring to leaders of the Paris Commune of 1871, is today used in China to refer to any leader or official or responsible person in charge who may or may not be a party member. There are senior cadres, or more important leaders, and junior cadres, or less important leaders. "Cadders," as the Chinese pronounce the word in English, are thus often managers who, Mao said in a speech on May 7, 1966 (hence "May 7" school), should get out of their offices and work with the people; i.e., peasants or workers. Again, on October 4, 1968, Mao reiterated that going down to labor was an excellent opportunity for cadres to renew contact with people who work with their hands, to know what they think and how they feel. A Chinese saying goes, "After you carry the shoulder pole (of the peasants), half your bureaucratic airs will be swept away."

During the 1966-69 Cultural Revolution, May 7 schools implied punishment; i.e., labor camps for bureaucrats believed to be not revolutionary enough or suspected of "taking the capitalist road" (i.e , advancing themselves without being sufficiently enthusiastic about "serving the people"). Now, rather than being labor camps as they originally were, they are work-and-study retreats which bureaucrats are expected--and expect--to attend once every few years.

We were told that the May 7 cadre school we visited had 200 students (BJP's notes report 500 students) from Peking's Eastern District; that they were aged 19-53, with most being under age 30, and 45% were women; that 1/4 were educators and most of them were principals; that their average stay was 6 months; that their pay went on as if they were still at work; that they would return to their jobs after the course, that the faculty included 40 teachers assigned by the Peking District Committee; that students studied books on Marxism; that they were now trying to understand the falsity of the Gang of Four; that they would reflect on their past to see if they had been carrying out the work of Mao; that 60% of their time would be spent in physical labor so as to remember their humble origins and so that they would hereafter wholeheartedly serve the people; that they were treated equally regardless of rank or job; that the purpose of the school was to combat revisionism (my italics because of this frank admission that May 7 schools combat individualism, ego, self-pride); that peasants and workers are invited to the school to tell students how they

suffered and labored before Liberation (a practice called "speaking bitterness"); that cadres attend a May 7 school once every five years; that this school's main problem was to know how to combine improved agricultural production with the study function; and that since 1968 the school had graduated 5,500.

During questions and answers, we were told that the People's Liberation Army(PLA) have their own cadre schools; that teachers at this May 7 school had been to university or were specialists in some field, had special knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and were chosen by the district leaders; that other May 7 schools were conducted differently; that our speaker (vice president of this particular school) had been head of the Party school of the District before the 1966-69 Cultural Revolution, that he had studied in this school, and then had been appointed vice president of this school; that there was at least one May 7 school in each of Peking's districts and that all leaders would attend a May 7 school sometime; and that the difference between a May 7 school and an ordinary cadre school was that the May 7 school combined theory and labor while (we guessed) a cadre school had less labor and gave more in-service indoctrination in current Chinese Communist ideology.

SATURDAY, JULY 15, 1978

THE GREAT WALL

By Train

Up early we went by bus to the railroad station, where hundreds of ordinary Chinese had gathered to watch quietly and politely as busloads of foreigners (many nationalities, with Americans seemingly a minority) filled the train bound for the Petaling portion (a rebuilt section) of the Great Wall. (Why the Chinese people gathered to stare is a question we pondered and later tried to answer). The train, fairly modern, efficient, and clean (even toilets), was crowded. Since our group's alloted seats were full, our Chinese guide Mr. Chang led us to seats with a Spanish group.

We went through hilly and green terrain and many tunnels. This country had been bare during my March 1974 visit (it was still cold) when my group traveled by bus, an approach which I thought gave a better view and offered better picture-taking opportunities of the old, largely broken down, meandering Great Wall which stretches for some 2000 miles.

After about 1 1/2 hours we reached the Petaling station and alighted. Then, in a general movement, it seemed that hundreds of us were walking the mile or so from the station to the wall. It was a wide and winding road and, being with so many others strewn over the road and often walking half a dozen abreast, we neglected to note identifying landmarks--an omission we later regretted.

It was a hot, bright sunny day, and exhilarating to be with the hundreds (probably thousands) representing dozens of countries, plus PRC Chinese and also overseas Chinese, all climbing the Petaling section of the Great Wall. The walk grew steeper the higher one climbed, until it seemingly approached a 45° incline, with walkers of all ages resting or joking or taking photographs. In a sweat, I made the top and, after resting, wound my way back to join a few of our group awaiting the others.

Lost!

It was early, well over an hour before announced train departure time. Let's walk, someone said. Harriet Treadwell, Betty, and I, leaving Mrs. Lu and a few others of our group, ambled off, gaily talking. There was an underpass, with a road to the left and to the right. Without thinking, we took the right. We ambled, talked, and casually observed Chinese people singly, in pairs, and in groups, walking past us. Motor vehicles, as well as carts drawn by animals and men also passed. As time went on the there was no train station, we began to remark that this road seemed somehow narrower than the one on which we had walked from the station. We wondered aloud whether we had taken the wrong road. Still joking but more tense and walking faster, we headed back, knowing that it would take us past train departure time to recover the ground we had walked.

Would we miss the train? If we were late, would it wait? We were now pretty sure that we had come perhaps two miles on the wrong road and so were walking fast, strung out, retracing our steps and occasionally trying to wave down passing buses and cars, hoping for a lift.

We tried asking directions, but not knowing Chinese was like being deaf and dumb. We were really concerned, not for our safety but about missing the train, about worrying our Chinese guides and other group members. I first noted an approaching car with an occupant in the back waving at me. Right behind was a minibus which stopped; a heavy-set Chinese man beside the driver got out and talked to Betty a hundred yards or so ahead of me. I could not hear but guessed that Betty in English and the man in Chinese were trying to say to each other--She: We're late for the train and want you to take us there in case it has waited for us; He: We know you are lost and have been looking for you, so get in quickly. He waved to me to hurry, and Harriet Treadwell came rushing up from a shortcut she had taken. Inside the careening minibus, we swayed around the curving road. Relieved but chagrined and still concerned, we joked nervously about our predicament.

After a time we realized and the Chinese man confirmed with a laugh: "Train gone!" "Back to Peking?" we wondered aloud. "Peking!" laughed the man, but in fact he and the driver, in a ride that took some 35 minutes but seemed more like two hours in our nervous state, took us to the lunch-and-rest stop on the way to the Ming Tombs, where they knew our group was headed. Here we waited, hot and embarrassed, until our companions arrived, relieved to find us, yet curious about how we had become lost. They had missed us. The train had been held up and searched--the first time, we were told, anyone in recent years had missed and delayed that train. Reluctantly, we heard, the engineer had left to keep the train schedule, while a hunt for us ensued on the likelihood that we had walked the wrong way. We told our story, both seriously and jokingly several times, admitted to being culpable, said we were ashamed to have caused so many people so much concern, and jested that we "felt like the 'Gang of Three'" and would feel better if we were somehow spanked and thus knew we had paid for our "crime." Mrs. Lu and Mr. Chang, our guides, realizing our innocent error and knowing we felt properly ashamed, urged us to forget that it ever happened. (A few days later, in his speech of farewell because we were leaving him and Peking, the young and personable Mr. Chang, who had become very friendly and empathic with our group as a whole, told us in absolute sincerity not to make fun of the Gang of Four because "their crimes were grievous to us"; i.e., the Chinese).

Thus ended our little misadventure of being lost at the Great Wall, worrisome at the time and even now causing us some embarrassment. Within a day or so, the episode was almost entirely forgotten by our group, busy every minute trying to understand this new and yet still-old China.

SUNDAY, JULY 16, 1978

MAO'S MAUSOLEUM

Mao's tomb is in the Mao Tse-tung Memorial Hall, an imposing granite building in Tien an Mien (Gate of Heavenly Peace) Square, bigger than Moscow's Red Square and the ceremonial center of China. The huge plaza, perhaps the world's largest, is off Peking's extremely wide main boulevard (Changan Tachieh), perhaps the world's widest and longest main street. The square is bordered by the Forbidden City on the north, the old gate of the city wall on the south, the Great Hall of the People on the west, and government offices, a museum, and the old foreign quarter to the east. The square was crowded with thousands of people (Sunday being a day off for many but not for all in this workaholic society), waiting in the hot sun in long, orderly, blocks of four abreast to enter the Mausoleum. There were long phalanxes of People's Liberation Army (PLA) men and women, many looking no more than 15 or 16 years old; long lines of school children, other ordinary Chinese, other foreigners (although the foreigners seemed to be ushered through ahead of everyone else). We had to request admission to the Mausoleum, which was open to invited people only on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. We were told that many of those waiting represented their factories and communes from China's remote areas whose entire brigade or work team had saved for months in order to send one representative to Peking to view Chairman Mao's remains. The buzz of thousands of voices hushed as our line neared the mausoleum. A sudden quiet fell upon us as we approached the steps, walked up them past a few tall young PLA guards, entered a large room dominated by a 14-foot-high seated, benign looking statue of Mao. Mao's serenity made us think of the seated figure in the Lincoln Memorial and of the phrase said of Lincoln at his death, "Now he belongs to the ages."

The line of four abreast divided and pairs walked in opposite directions, then merged and divided again as we entered the starkly simple room where Mao's embalmed body lies enclosed in a crystal casket guarded by several young PLA soldiers. Mao himself was sharply visible, draped to the chin in a flag of China. The line moved steadily, so that no one had more than a few seconds at the crystal coffin. He looked to me like a little old, worn and weary man (actually Mao had been rather tall). I saw the mole, always included in his pictures and portraits, and what appeared to be splotchy old brown skin. I saw his sloping, high forehead and the thinning, back-swept black hair. I remembered reading what Napoleon said: "Let China sleep; when she wakes she will shake the earth."

Here was a man, raised to godhead, worshipped and hated by many, who had indeed shaken the Chinese earth and perhaps the world. I thought back to my visit to Lenin's tomb on a cold November day in 1971: the same hushed atmosphere, the same long lines, the same deathly solemnity among guards and visitors alike. We had walked down stairs to Lenin's tomb and up stairs to Mao's tomb. Both were professional revolutionaries who had left their mark on our century and beyond. Mao, I think, had said that World War I led to Russian communism; World War II, to Chinese communism; and World War III (if it comes) will lead to world communism. I walked with

others through the remaining room beyond the tomb, came out in the sun, walked down the stairs, still enveloped in silence and in thought, reminiscent to me of the wonder I felt after seeing for the first time the film "2001: A Space Odyssey."

I have since reflected on that visit and my reaction and have reminded myself of Mao's humanness: he was earthy and not above using barn yard words; had several wives and probably more mistresses; had been a teacher and a founder of several schools; had struggled with and against the Red Army and CCP schisms as he clawed his way to power before and after the Long March of 1935; had first used as necessary partners and then denounced and utterly crushed Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao, among many others. How like the exalted emperors he had become. How like holy writ his every word and thought had been made. History will still have to tell whether the egalitarian socialist China Mao built will supplant the centuries-old class-obligated China which Confucius represented.

20-23 JULY 1978

YENAN

Yenan is a shrine, in many ways the birthplace of the Chinese Communist revolution. To this provincial mountain town, 80,000 population, 420 miles southwest of Peking, Mao had brought the 20,000 exhausted survivors of an original army of 100,000 who, in the Long March of 1934-35, trekked over 6,000 miles through some of China's most rugged terrain to break away from Chiang Kai-shek's encircling Nationalist Army. From frequently bombed Yenan (no bomb damage visible now), Mao fought first the Japanese and then the Nationalists. Here, where he, Chou En-lai, and the other Communist leaders had lived in their still-to-be-seen cave homes, Mao wrote 92 of the 158 pieces of his Collected Works. Here he first rose to command of the then and still faction-ridden Chinese Communist Party.

The bombed and restored tenth century pagoda dominates the town's hills, while the Memorial Museum of the Chinese Communist Revolution attracts students and diehard Communists but so far relatively few foreign visitors. The museum is crammed full of revolutionary memorabilia. A huge map lights up to show the circuitous route of the Long March. There are greatly enlarged, grainy photographs of Yenan wartime scenes. Also displayed is American military field equipment which the Communists captured from Chiang's forces. Attracting some smiles, at least from our group, is the stuffed white horse which Mao rode during the Long March. The museum is too much Mao. And while Mao items predominate, Yenan, rural and rugged in its provincial mountain setting, is somehow bigger even than Mao.

When one visits the Yenan building where the early Congresses were held, one senses the work of many minds and the clash of many wills that took place in order to build the Communist Party and win the Communist Revolution. There are signs and slogans everywhere, such as "Hold The Spirit of Yenan Forever Bright," indicating that this was a heroic city some 40 years ago. Now its dusty streets are filled, not with soldiers, but with animal and man-drawn as well as motorized vehicles. Yenan is simply part of China, and all of China is supposedly as revolutionary as Yenan once was.

They said, but I could not tell, that the people here were a bit darker skinned than elsewhere. They also said, and I did see, that the old windows were made of pale paper rather than of glass. The cave homes, still used although there is much modern housing, make sense since they are cool in summer and warm in winter.

Yenan may have been a revolutionary town, but it is now dominated by a peasant atmosphere. One sees in Yenan the importance of Mao's direct contact with the peasants, his belief in and reliance on their common sense, for the peasants are everywhere, easy to see and know. In China, even the cities have a strong rural flavor. Yenan is rural, as is all of China.

SIAN

23 JULY 1978

Sian is an old city, formerly the capital, with prehistoric relics dating back to 6,000 B.C. We visited the site where, in 1974, well diggers stumbled on an entrance to the Chin tomb (200 B.C.), where have been found 8,000 life-size pottery figures of warriors, horses, and other relics. Although I had seen this "dig" described in the April, 1978, National Geographic, we never dreamed that 3 months later we would be at the actual site. We saw the erected skeleton of what will be a gigantic museum to display the findings, an expensive undertaking for China, which is normally careful about state expenditures. The tomb is that of the Emperor Chin, who ruled during 221-206 B.C., the first ruler to unite China and after whom the country is named. The Chinese Communists disdain the emperors as exploiters, but they like this Emperor Chin because, instead of burying his live retinue to keep him company in the next world, he was humane enough to have the pottery figures of warriors made and buried instead.

CONFUCIUS

24 JULY 1978

We also went to the Shensi Provincial Museum, normally closed Mondays but opened especially because some of our group wanted to visit it. Originally it was a Confucian temple. It contains thousands of 9-feet high stone tablets carved with the sayings and wisdom of Confucius and his disciples. An anti-Confucius campaign was in progress during my 1974 visit to China. Confucius taught the harmony of ordered loyalties: loyalty of subject to emperor, wife to husband, son to father, daughter to mother, serf to landlord, and so on. Although downplayed since Liberation, Confucianism's advocacy of submission to an ordered society did not fit the ultra-leftist Chinese Communists who launched the 1966-69 Cultural Revolution. With Mao's death and the triumph of moderates over the ultra-leftist Gang of Four, Confucius' teachings are now tolerated.

Sian, 1.2 million population plus 2.8 million in the suburbs, also has natural hot springs which made it a health resort for the privileged for many hundreds of years. Here, because of the springs, occurred the Sian Incident in December 1936. Chiang Kai-shek was on a holiday respite from fighting the Chinese Communists (preferring to fight them rather than the Japanese, whose invasion of Manchuria was well launched). One of Chiang's own military men who favored a united front with the Communists against the Japanese placed Chiang under house arrest. Our young

woman guide showed us the bedroom from which Chiang, hearing shots and fearing he would be killed, fled, allegedly in his pajamas and without his false teeth. He was caught and retained while Communist negotiators, including Chou En-lai, obtained his release in return for a united front agreement against the Japanese. This story was told with obvious relish by the young guide. I could not help contrasting Chiang at Sian and Mao at Yenan. If Chiang, originally trained in Russia, had sided with the peasants, he would, like Mao, have been a hero to our young guide. Instead, in supporting the landlords and the status quo, he became--as the guide said with a laugh--a "bad act."

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

MONDAY, 17 JULY 1978

Knowing how communes worked, having visited both agricultural and factory communes in 1974, I was eager to know how an urban Neighborhood Center was organized. For in China, where everything and everyone is organized, two key areas of control ("involvement" is more descriptive and less pejoriatve than "control") are where one works and where one lives. Peking's 6 million population is divided into 9 districts and 9 counties, each of which is divided into neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Center we were visiting had about 1,000 families totaling about 5,000 people and was responsible for overseeing housing, nurseries (schools are run by the Education authorities), health clinics, hygiene, traffic control, and such local minor civil concerns as disputes, small thefts, and marital difficulties (courts deal with more serious crimes and misdemeanors). The Neighborhood Center subdivides its responsibility among Street Committees, which involve everyone living on a street. We were told that Street Committee duties include: political study in the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao Tse-tung; organizing "local production," i.e., making functional use as needed of housewives' spare time; promoting mutual help, as for example getting retired people to help working families with their marketing and transporting children as needed; promoting hygiene, sanitation, and maintaining clinics; and acting (ombudsman-like) as a channel for complaints.

We were told that Neighborhood Committees are funded by "higher authorities," and by some locally produced funds, as when housewives' spare time is used to produce needed items which are sold for profit. Housing is allocated by a Peking Housing Administration in consultation with the Neighborhood Committees and in keeping with what is available through various Street Committees.

Members of the District, Neighborhood, and Street Committees are locally nominated and elected under Party Supervision. Women are active and hold leadership positions at all levels.

I thought I understood how the urban Neighborhood Committees worked, and I contrasted this process with China's over 80,000 communes. Communes are agro-technical units, as self-contained and self-reliant as possible, growing and making almost everything they need (they have to buy some things, of course, but are remarkably self-reliant in producing their essential needs). The commune governed by a Revolutionary Committee, sets overall policies and tasks, is composed of brigades, each also governed by a Revolutionary Committee, who set brigade policy and tasks, and under each brigade are production teams, the smallest working unit of people who normally live close together. The Mass Line comes down from the commune level, is debated in Democratic Centralism terms at the brigade and particularly the production team level, where the

practical sense of the workers-peasants acts to make the Mass Line functional.

The urban comparison is that each city is divided into Districts, with Neighborhood Centers in each District and Street Committees in each Neighborhood. Thus, although its residents work in various places, the city is like a commune, the Neighborhood Center is like a brigade, and the Street Committee is like a production team, with the Mass Line coming down and being debated and reported back in terms of how best to carry it out (Democratic Centralism).

In China, then, everyone has a place to fit in at work and at home. Everyone is known and cared about. Everyone is involved. It is a form of control Americans would probably not be comfortable with, but it seems to work among China's nearly 1 billion people who are for the first time free from previous endemic starvation and suffering. To us, the control and conformity seem a high price to pay. To the average Chinese, whose lives out of sheer economic and political necessity have always been controlled, it seems an acceptable and secure alternative to previous suffering and starvation. Under this close "involvement," they may even be less anxiety-ridden and have less mental illness than the free-wheeling, competitive Western societies.

FAREWELL TO CHINA

28 JULY 1978

Our farewell banquet in Shanghai was gay, although not so memorable as the one in Taiyuan, where, hearing us sing through the open windows, a crowd of several thousands gathered. Taiyuan was the high point in human terms because of how magically our appearance and singing created an empathic bond with those thousands. We sang before them perhaps only ten minutes, but it was ten minutes which we and many of them will never forget.

Mrs. Lu was right when, at our final parting embrace, she quoted an old Chinese proverb by saying, "Remember, despite all you have seen, you have still only seen China as if from a galloping horse."

And so the visit was over, but there was no letdown, for Betty and I were immediately caught up in the task of finding our way in expensive Tokyo. There we met on July 31 with the United Nations University staff at a seminar in which we led a discussion on ways to promote international understanding.

The return air flight was uneventful; after a few days at home, we left to attend on August 6-11 an Intercollegiate Studies Institute session at Georgetown University, Washington, DC. There I began to write this report on China. In the writing, it occurred to me that within a month we had moved from the atmosphere of the most militantly doctrinal of Communist countries to the conservative atmosphere of this Georgetown University conference searching ways to maintain "Equality and the Free Society." Somewhere between these two worlds--hopefully this side of freedom--must lie our future.